Dewan.—If you can find any persons or companies in Travancore to work the mica mines, Government would be glad to help them in all reasonable ways by granting concessions. This information is meant for all the Members of the Assembly.

Member.—Thank you, Sir, I shall try.

Another industry awaiting development was plumbago. The portion of Edanad referred to above had 18,000 acres of garden lands and 27,000 acres of wet lands. With a little convenience for irrigation the garden lands could easily be converted into smiling paddy fields which would go a long way to increase the food supply in the land. The prevailing scarcity of water had been a serious handicap to the agricultrists. The Kodayar scheme, instead of supplying water, had in one sense brought about water famine. For, there was a large number of tanks where water used to be stored for agricultural purposes and every year a certain amount of money was being spent to maintain those tanks. But, in expectation of the Kodayar water, those old tanks had become disused and were neglected. It was, therefore, necessary to renovate those tanks and restore them at the cost of Government. As there was a large area of land on a higher elevation, pumps might be installed and tube-wells sunk. It was not possible to describe the acuteness of the scarcity of water. The Member submitted that the unspent Government grant for the past 10 or 15 years could be utilized for the purposes mentioned by him. In conclusion, the Member requested that enquiries might be ordered to be made by the Dewan Peishkar and further action taken.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

50. Need for remedying the difficulties experienced by ryots in the Vilavancode taluk.

Mr. N. Sankaranarayana Pillai (Member, Vilavancode Taluk) described the precarious agricultural conditions of the taluk and observed that the people of the taluk depended entirely on rain water for cultivation. The last crop was an utter failure on account of untimely showers and, in spite of the Kuzhithura river, they were always suffering from scarcity of water. The Government were spending on an average Rs. 5,500 in connection with the repair of irrigation tanks. When the Right Bank Channel was proposed to be cut, the expenditure on the tanks was stopped. The Member's request was that the work of extending the Right Bank Channel be proceeded with and completed, as it would fertilize not only the Vilavancode taluk but a major portion of the Neyyattinkara taluk also. If that was not possible, the Mannanpara dam, about 6 miles further down the Pechippara Works, which only required some repairs, might be put in order and a channel cut to take the surplus water, now running to waste, to paddy fields thirsting for water. That would benefit Neyyattinkara also. If that was done, a water cess might also be levied and the Government would be able to realize a good sum of money from the sale of lands. The above grievances were represented at several sessions of the Assembly with no good result. The people were also prepared to meet a portion of the expenditure by raising a fund from among themselves. The Member, therefore, requested an early solution of the problem.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

51. Agricultural difficulties of the Shencottah Taluk.

Mr. S. Subrahmanya Karayalar B. A. (Member, Shencottah Taluk) said that the urgent need of Shencottah was the supply of enough water for agricultural purposes. The Tank Restoration Scheme had not improved matters much, as the water-holding capacity of the reservoirs had not undergone any change, nor had the scheme benefited channel-fed lands. One-half of Shencottah taluk was being served by two small rivers which were likely to be affected, if the coupe system of clearing the forests were persisted in. For, such clearing would dry up the springs. It was,

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therefore, highly desirable that the trees on the slopes should be carefully protected. The Member suggested that, to ensure a never-failing supply of water, the Palaruvi or the Achenkoil river should be diverted, as, in that case, the construction of large reservoirs now contemplated could be avoided. If it was considered a costly scheme, the people were ready to contribute half the cost. The surplus water, if any, could be made available to the people in the adjoining British District also on payment of a cess.

Their next difficulty was scarcity of money; loans on low interest should be advanced.

In common with other parts of the State, the people of Shencottah also had their trouble in regard to cattle, owing to there being no pasture lands for them. Necessary facilities should also be afforded to enable the ryots to have agricultural implements made or repaired at moderate cost. They might also be collected in Depots and sold to ryots at cost price.

The people were also suffering much on account of want of roads, because they could not carry the agricultural products for sale. It would be better if the important ryots were asked to meet and discuss the subject of roads under the presidency of the Executive Engineer and the Assistant Engineer instructed to prepare a list of minor roads requiring improvement.

The Manure Depot in the taluk was working well. It should be supplemented by the opening of an Agricultural Farm.

There was no definite rule or system under which remission of tax was allowed when there was full or partial failure of crops. The Government should call for periodical reports as regards seasonal conditions and crops as in British India.

In conclusion, the Member suggested that, as the dealings of the people of Shencottah were with those in British India, the weights and measures in the latter should be introduced in the Shencottah taluk, as otherwise the people were put to great inconvenience and hardship.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

52. Agricultural difficulties of the Thiruvalla Taluk.

Mr. V. S. Krishna Pillai (Member, Thiruvalla Taluk) described the condition of agriculture in the taluk and the nature of the difficulties the ryots had in connection with *punja* cultivation. The chief difficulties were the encroachments on *chals* and the registry of such encroachments. The Agricultural Loans Regulation should be so amended as to make it more useful to the poor agriculturists. Manure Depots should be opened in all the rural parts. There should also be more grazing lands for cattle.

Dewan's reply.—In regard to the old encroachments already registered, it is not practicable to take any action now. If the local officers are kept informed of the encroachments not registered, they would take the necessary steps. Action has already been taken to amend the Agricultural Loans Regulation suitably. The other suggestions of the Member are noted.

53. Want of facilities for *punja* cultivation.

Mr. Joseph Thomas (Member, Changanacherry Taluk) complained that nothing had been done in the past to help the *punja* cultivators of the taluk. He was aware of the efforts of the Agricultural Department to cultivate, as an experimental measure, *punja* lands on scientific methods. In the meanwhile, a scheme had been started to cultivate 1,000 *paras* of *punja* lands under the auspices of the Agricultural Association which was being formed. It would be highly advantageous if an Agricultural Inspector could be specially told off for the experimental cultivation by the Agricultural Association and for such other agricultural matters as would be of use to the Association formed of the ryots of Changanacherry, Kottayam, Alleppey, and Thiruvalla.

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